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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ABUJA 001871

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL CONTACT GROUP ON GUINEA RECOMMENDS
OBSERVATION FORCE AND ARMS EMBARGO

Classified By: Political Counselor James P. McAnulty
for reasons in Sections 1.4. (B) and (D)

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) The October 12 International Contact Group (ICG) on Guinea discussed the crisis in Guinea and received reports of "total disorder" within Guinea and "harassment of the civilian population by a military which wants to impose itself on the country." "Les Forces Vivres" representatives gave eyewitness testimony of the massacre and presented a video showing events at the stadium before the carnage began. The ICG communiqu recommended creating an International Commission of Inquiry and an international observer and protection mission, establishing an arms embargo, and creating a new transitional authority in place of the National Council for Democracy and Change (CNDD). ECOWAS has called a meeting of Heads of State and Government to discuss Guinea on October 17. END SUMMARY.

ECOWAS AND AU TAKE STRONG STAND AGAINST CNDD

2. (SBU) The ICG, comprised of representatives from the African Union (AU), ECOWAS, UN, European Commission, Libya, Nigeria, Organization of Islamic Conference, Germany, Spain, Japan, and four of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, discussed recent developments in Guinea. Dr. Mohamed Chambas, ICG Co-Chair and President of ECOWAS, opened the meeting with a minute of silence in memory of victims of September 28. Referring to CNDD as a mere continuation of the repression seen under late President Lasona Conte, Chambas condemned the CNDD's "irresponsible use of state power" to suppress civil societies and political parties exercising rights of free speech and assembly. He called on the international community to establish a commission of inquiry and noted ECOWAS' "authority to impose sanctions for violations of human rights and for the stabilization of electoral rules." AU Co-chair Ibrahim Fall spoke more cautiously, asking that any ICG initiative be "aligned harmoniously with efforts taken by President Campaore." Fall called on the CNDD to reiterate in writing promises to refrain from participating in the upcoming January 2010 elections.

CAMPAORE FINDS TOTAL DISORDER IN CONAKRY

¶3. (C) Behind closed doors, Chambas and Fall briefed the ICG on Campaore's initial findings from his October 6 visit to Conakry. Campaore had described "ongoing harassment of the civilian population by a military which wants to impose itself on the country." According to Campaore's report, he had never seen such "total disorder" in a city where armed soldiers and security forces loitered throughout the streets. Chambas announced that Campaore would send a second fact-finding team to Conakry this week to see if the CNDD has acted on his demands to account for missing persons, provide medical care to injured persons, free political prisoners, restrict soldiers' movement, and lift media restrictions. Qrestrict soldiers' movement, and lift media restrictions.

UN AND FRENCH SEEK INTERVENTION AND SANCTIONS

¶4. (C) UN Special Representative for West Africa Said Djinnit, who served as the AU Director of Peace and Security from 2003-2008, called for the creation of an international commission of inquiry, deployment of security observers, and establishment of sanctions against those who perpetrated the September 28 massacre.

CNDD: DEMOCRACY LINKED TO SECURITY AND ARMY

¶5. (C) CNDD Foreign Affairs Minister Alexandre Cece Loua thanked the ICG for its willingness to help Guinea transition

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to democracy. Loua described the events of September 28 as a failure by "authorities within the armed forces," not by the CNDD, and noted that "there are always setbacks and unforeseen events in such processes." He then requested international support in overhauling Guinea's military infrastructure. Loua declared, "There can be no democracy without security; our army needs to be redesigned for the restoration of democracy; we need a republican army."

CNDD: RAPES MAY NOT HAVE OCCURRED

¶6. (C) Loua and a second CNDD delegate downplayed reports of numerous victims from the September 28 attack. On alleged missing bodies, the CNDD delegate stated that a unit had been established in the hospital "to react to any complaints -- if it receives complaints." On displaced persons, he replied "very soon there will be a list of displaced persons disseminated to Guineans and the international community -- assuming there are displaced persons." On victims of rape, he said, "the Minister of Health is heading a commission to receive women -- if there have been any rapes." Loua stated that the CNDD had set up an internal commission of magistrates, lawyers, law professors, medical doctors, and "les Force Vivres" representatives, and trade unions -- all appointed by presidential decree -- to investigate the events. When pressed by Fall that Camara renew in writing his intent not to run for president, Loua replied, "the constitution is suspended, and there is no legal basis for making such a statement." He implied that, because the framework for the election has not yet been set, no one can be a candidate or non-candidate.

"LES FORCES VIVRES" SEE POSSIBLE GUERRILLA UPRISING

¶7. (C) "Les Forces Vivres" representatives gave eyewitness testimony and played a video taken in Conakry on September 28. "Les Forces Vivres" leader Mouctar Diallo described "a civil war threatening Guinea." He noted a "persistent rumor that Captain Camara was present in the stadium" during the events and that Camara has begun recruiting rebels from the

forest region of Guinea (his place of origin) and Liberia. Diallo claimed that 500 volunteers were organizing for an armed rebellion against the CNDD. Though he welcomed the visit by President Campaore, he rejected mediation as a solution, saying "any dialogue with soldiers is useless." Prior to departing for Abuja, security forces at the Conakry airport detained the Forces Vivre delegation, Diallo said, until he was handed a cell phone on which Camara himself told him that only he had granted them permission to leave, and "if I step down, I will kill you all first." "Les Forces Vivre" representatives repeatedly rejected the utility of more dialogue and insisted on immediate sanctions and an intervention force to protect members of the opposition.

ICG COMMUNIQUE

18. (C) ICG participants approved a final communique
Q8. (C) ICG participants approved a final communique requesting establishment of an International Commission of Inquiry to investigate the September 28 massacre of unarmed civilians and rapes. The European Commission representative at the October 12 ICG indicated the Commission had funds available for such a mission. The French sought to add sanctions, but the Russians revised the clause to "urge partners to immediately prepare mechanisms for appropriate targeted sanctions." The Russian ambassador had previously approached Charge to say sanctions would be "problematic" for him. The communique invited ECOWAS to set up an international observer and protection mission, recommended an arms embargo on Guinea based on reports that the CNDD Minister of Defense traveled to Ukraine to negotiate an arms deal, and expressed support for a new transitional authority in place of the CNDD. (Embassy forwarded to the Department (AF/W) the text of the final communique.)

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HEADS OF STATE MEETING SET FOR OCTOBER 17

19. (SBU) The Nigerian representative informed ICG participants that Nigerian President Umaru Yar'Adua, in his capacity as rotating ECOWAS President, has summoned an "extraordinary meeting" of Heads of State and Government of the region on October 17 in Abuja to discuss the situation in Guinea and the Niger Republic. Yar'Adua reportedly told ECOWAS parliament members of his concern that the military leaders in Guinea were not working in accordance with the agreements reached with ECOWAS. The Nigerian representative also announced that a meeting of the ECOWAS Peace and Security Council will take place in Abuja October 29 to discuss the outcome of the October 17 Heads of State meeting.

COMMENT

110. (C) ECOWAS, UN, and especially AU representatives do not yet appear ready to halt mediation efforts by President Campaore, but no one disputed the need for prompt forceful action against the CNDD. Djinnit and French Foreign Ministry African Affairs Director Stephane Gompertz played a positive role in securing the communique's key action points. END COMMENT.

SANDERS